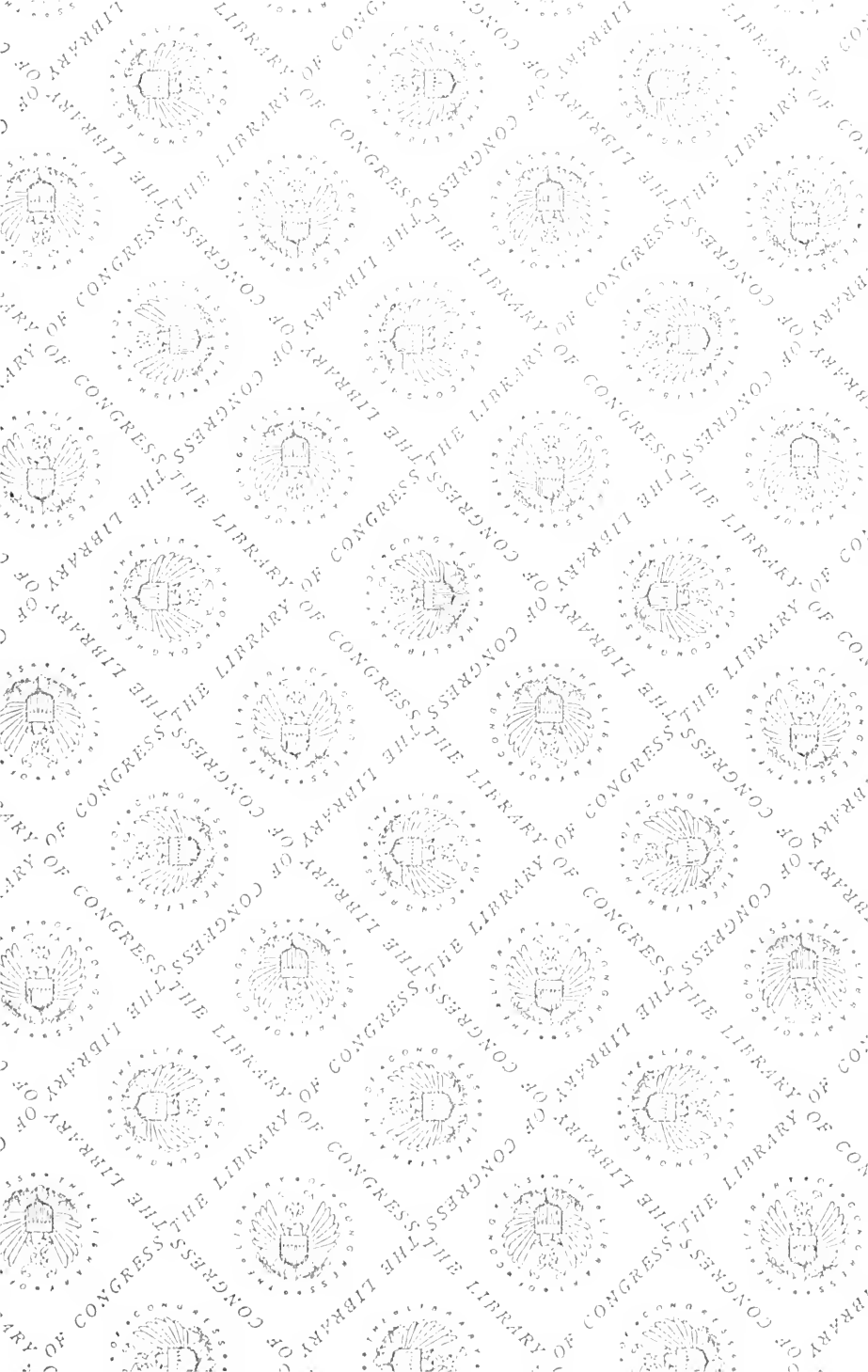


F 526
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J. D. G. Kelso

Nelson, William Rockwell

In Memoriam

ISAAC DE GROFF NELSON

DIED MARCH 24, 1891

F526
.N43

ISAAC DE GROFF NELSON was born in Poughkeepsie,
'New York, on July 2, 1810. He died at his home
in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on March 24, 1891. The
following spontaneous tributes of respect to his long
life of steadfast endeavor, which were called forth by
his death, are reproduced in a more enduring form for
the gratification of relatives and friends, to whom his
memory will always be dear.

"Green be the turf above thee,
Friend of our better days;
None knew thee but to love thee,
None named thee but to praise."

W. R. N.

SKETCH OF HIS LIFE.

ISAAC DE GROFF NELSON was born in the town of Poughkeepsie, County of Dutchess, and State of New York, on the 2d day of July, 1810. His father, Leonard Nelson, was a farmer, the son of John Nelson, a Revolutionary soldier who died soon after his return from the army, but not until he had received 500 acres of land in the town of Dryden, Tompkins County, State of New York, for heroic services during the war. His mother's maiden name was Mary De Groff, daughter of Moses De Groff of the same place, whose whole family were conspicuous for their patriotism during the trying period of the Revolution, especially Moses, the youngest of the family, on account of voluntary personal sacrifices while engaged in guarding against the threatened invasion of the British, and in preventing their intercourse with their allies (the Tories) and the cowboys that swarmed all along the east side of the Hudson River, between Poughkeepsie and New York City, a region occupied by a class especially noted for their wealth and loyalty to the British crown. The De Groffs were in that particular line of service, and especially between Poughkeepsie and Tarrytown, at the time of the capture of Major Andre, the British spy.

The subject of this sketch was brought up to agricultural pursuits, having only such very moderate opportunities for a common school education, during the winter months, as the rural district schools of that day furnished. His father dying when he, the only son, was 16 years of age, leaving a small farm considerably encumbered, and with a feeble mother and three sisters younger than himself (one of whom was a confirmed invalid) to be supported mainly by his individual exertions, he saw rugged times of unceasing toil and hardship until he was 20 years of age, when his ambitious nature prompted him to suggest to a friend the propriety of his starting a small country store. The suggestion met with some favor, and, through the influence and credit of his uncle, Amos T. De Groff, he was able to start the desired enterprise. The business, although limited, proved quite successful and was continued for the benefit of the whole family for the succeeding six years. In 1836 he and his sisters (his mother having previously married again) emigrated to Fort Wayne, where he resided the remainder of his life.

On August 23, 1838, he married Elizabeth Rockhill, daughter of Hon. William Rockhill, an early settler of Fort Wayne, who was a Van Buren elector in 1836, and subsequently a representative in both branches of the State Legislature, and a member of the Thirtieth Congress of the United States. Although Mr. Rockhill was always a practical farmer, he was also a somewhat prominent politician and always a Democrat.

Mr. Nelson's father was also a Democrat and a politician of local note and success in his day. He

belonged to the old Jeffersonian, Tompkins and Jacksonian school of politicians. He was elected to several offices of trust, one of which he held at the time of his death, at the age of 41, in the full vigor of manhood and usefulness.

It would seem that the subject of this sketch had inherited some of the political proclivities of his ancestors, who were all Democrats and participated actively in the politics of the day, for we find him elected a School Commissioner at 21, Postmaster at 22, at Freedom Plains, N. Y., his place of business, under William T. Barry, Postmaster-General; appointed Commissioner of Deeds for the County of Dutchess by the Judges of the court at 23, and at 24 appointed to take the county census—all of which trusts he discharged with such fidelity that at the age of 25 he was elected from his county delegate to the New York Democratic State convention, which met at Albany for the purpose of making nominations for State officers, but more especially for the purpose of bringing forward prominently the name of Martin Van Buren as a candidate for President of the United States. Van Buren was subsequently nominated at the national convention and elected. It was more than an ordinary honor to be a delegate to that convention, for it consisted of only 128 members, apportioned according to the members of the General Assembly, and Mr. Nelson (then only 25 years of age) represented the largest county in the State, except New York City and County, in one of the most exciting and important conventions ever held in that State. This convention, it was thought, would, as it actually did, name the next

President of the United States. Although Mr. Nelson was the youngest member of the convention and took, of course, no active part in its business, yet we find him appointed one of the committee to invite Governor Marcy to take a seat with the officers of the convention.

Since his residence in Fort Wayne, which dates back to 1836, he has been actively engaged in public and private business of various kinds, but most of the time in agricultural, horticultural and kindred pursuits, occupations which always seemed particularly congenial to his nature, and in which centered his greatest pleasure. His rural home, Elm Park, four miles east of the city of Fort Wayne, was regarded the finest and most complete place in the State in all of its appointments. His farm stock consisted of all of the finest imported breeds, and his orchards numbered over 4,000 bearing trees of the choicest fruits of all kinds. His attractive Gothic house and convenient out-buildings, his extensive and beautifully laid out grounds, handsomely planted and decorated with the rarest flowers, shrubs and ornamental trees, approached by suitable drives and walks, made it a place of great attraction and pleasant resort for the numerous friends of the family, and other visitors, particularly pomologists, horticulturists, agriculturists and stock breeders. On the occasion of the State Fair being held at Fort Wayne in 1865 the entire Board of Agriculture and other visitors, including Warder, Meehan, Downing and Heaver, made a special visit to his residence by cars tendered by the Wabash railroad to see his place and inspect his grounds, which were handsomely described by correspondents of the Chi-

cago, Cincinnati and Eastern papers. He was foremost in all movements to promote agricultural interests, and furnished John Lillie the money to establish the first tile factory in the State. He underdrained every acre of his own farm.

In June, 1840, when politics ran very high all over the country, Mr. Nelson's zeal induced him to purchase of George W. Wood the Fort Wayne *Sentinel*, a Whig paper in a then overwhelming Whig County. He became its publisher and editor, and at once changed its politics to that of a Democratic paper. Its politics has remained the same to the present time, and it is now the oldest Democratic paper in the State. The politics of the county also changed, and Allen County soon became, and is now, the banner Democratic county of the State. Whether the paper was instrumental in effecting so radical a change or not it undoubtedly exercised much influence in that direction.

In 1851 Mr. Nelson was elected, without opposition, representative to the General Assembly of the State. It was the first meeting of the Legislature under the new State constitution. All the old laws were abolished by the convention, and hence new ones had to be enacted conforming to the new constitution. Mr. Nelson was one of the active members of that body, being on several important committees and especially on the Committee of Ways and Means. He was the author of, and championed through the Legislature, what was known as the "Nelson Railroad Bill," a general railroad law, under which, with some slight changes, all the railroads of the State since then

have been organized and are now operating. The passage of this law was violently opposed by all the members whose constituents were interested in roads already in operation, or which had charters for the purpose of establishing them. Immediately upon the adjournment of the Legislature (which lasted nearly six months as provided by the constitution) he assisted in the organization of the Wabash road at a meeting held at Logansport in June, 1852. This was the first railroad organized under the general law.

In 1843 Mr. Nelson was appointed, after the death of Major Samuel Lewis, Receiver of Public Moneys at Fort Wayne. The district for the sale of public lands extended from the Ohio State line to Howard County on the Southwest, and included several Indian reservations in which the Indian title had been extinguished, and which were mostly sold during his term of office. His term expired very suddenly upon the occasion of General Taylor's accession to the Presidency. During his term as Receiver he was also appointed Paymaster or agent for the payment of the annual annuities of the Miami Indians resident in Indiana. He introduced, with some difficulty, the system of paying the Indians their annuities in silver, giving the money to the head of each of the several distinct families, instead of, as had been the custom, settling their accounts first with the traders and paying the Indians the balance that was left, if anything, which was said to be seldom the case. This was an innovation and a sore disappointment to the traders, who tried to create some trouble, chiefly through George Hunt, a well known half-breed Indian, who was instigated by the traders.

But the agent persisted in his determination, to the great satisfaction of the Indians when made to understand their interests, and to the special satisfaction of the government at Washington, to which it had been represented by the traders that the Indians had always been satisfied with the old system of settlements, and that a change would result seriously to the Indians and traders alike. But after the payment was made, so well was the department pleased with the manner and success with which it was done, that the Hon. William Medill of the War Department, upon the settlement of Mr. Nelson's accounts, wrote under date of Nov. 9, 1847, a complimentary letter, closing as follows: "Accept, if you please, the thanks of this office for the performance of said duty"—a rare compliment, and said to be unusual with the heads of departments at Washington.

Mr. Nelson was twice elected Clerk of the Allen County Circuit Court, and in 1873 was unanimously nominated by a large convention composed of both parties as candidate for the State Senate; but, having determined to retire from active political life that he might pursue more uninterruptedly occupations in accordance with his natural tastes and inclinations, he declined the honor.

He was for many years a life member of the National Pomological Society, and was always foremost in all agricultural, horticultural, pomological and similar organizations and enterprises of the day, whether local, county, state, district or national. He was in turn President, Vice-President and Secretary of all of them. He was appointed by Governor Baker a

member of the first Board of Trustees of Purdue University, properly the Agricultural College of Indiana, which position he resigned in a few years on account of other more pressing public and private duties. He was appointed by Governor Williams one of the first Commissioners for the responsible trust for the erection of the new Capitol for the State of Indiana, in 1877, which position he held until the building was completed, which was accomplished within the limit of the first appropriation, a case almost without parallel.

In the conception and subsequent organization of Lindenwood Cemetery, near the city of Fort Wayne, in 1860, one of the loveliest places in design, improvements and ornamentation as a city of the dead to be found anywhere, Mr. Nelson was one of the first twelve incorporators, and was also the first President, which position he still held at the time of his death.

In religion Mr. Nelson was an Episcopalian, and was Vestryman and Warden of Trinity Church, Fort Wayne, for more than forty years, and Senior Warden at the time of his death, as he had been for many years previously.

In all local and charitable institutions and public enterprises he always participated to the extent of his financial ability. Upon the completion of the Wabash and Erie canal, which was the great event of the day, he took an active part in getting up the celebration, which occurred July 4, 1839, and was one of the committee of invitation and reception. General Cass delivered the oration, and all the dignitaries of the State were present, as well as many from other States. Letters of congratulation and regret were read from

President Van Buren, from Webster, Clay, Calhoun and Benton, and all the other prominent statesmen of the nation to whom letters of invitation had been sent.

Mr. Nelson was essentially a self-made man, under very disadvantageous circumstances, as we have seen. He obtained what information he could between hours of labor incident to a hard-working life on the farm which was necessary to the support of those chiefly dependent upon him for their maintenance and education. And yet his writings on practical agriculture, horticulture, pomology, rural architecture, on the method of beautifying public and private grounds, tree culture, etc., as well as on political subjects, especially free trade (the one great political hobby of his life), are familiar to the reading public and popular with those of similar tastes and cultivation of thought. He assisted in establishing the first successful nursery of fruit and ornamental trees in his section of the State, and also assisted, in 1856, in the organization of the first live stock company for the importation and sale of blooded cattle, and was the largest purchaser at the first sale. His stock always took first premiums wherever exhibited in or out of the State, whether as show cattle for breeding purposes or as fat cattle for the butcher. He was well known as a first-class, intelligent breeder of Short Horn cattle and Cotswold sheep, and at one of his sales he sold large numbers to go to Illinois, Wisconsin and other States. He also took over one hundred and fifty first premiums in money and silver cups on fruit at different fairs in this and other States.

Mr. Nelson was one of the original organizers,

stockholders and treasurer of the first packet boat company that operated on the Wabash and Erie canal, and was also one of the stockholders of the Maumee City (Ohio) and Fort Wayne (Ind.) Steam-Boat Company, organized for the purpose of navigating the Maumee river. He was the only Fort Wayne passenger on the first and only trip the steamer made on these waters. The river was at high water mark in consequence of recent floods, completely overflowing its banks and submerging the country along the entire route. Mr. Nelson rode on horseback from Fort Wayne to the "head of the rapids," near Maumee City (where the vessel was built and chiefly owned by White & Kirtland, commission merchants), a distance of nearly one hundred miles, leaving his horse there until he made the adventurous round trip to Fort Wayne and back. The round trip was safely accomplished in six days by the captain dexterously dodging floating trees, sawlogs, bridge timbers, fence rails and a saw mill on their way to the lake. This was a trial trip to test the practicability of the slack water navigation between Fort Wayne and Lake Erie. The scheme was considered impracticable and the steamer was transferred at once to less dangerous waters, running, as was understood, quite successfully between Maumee City and Detroit, *via* Monroe, Michigan.

He viewed with serious alarm the rapid increase of intemperance and consequent vice and immorality in our country, and religiously believed its progress could never be arrested until the manufacture and sale of all intoxicating drinks were prohibited by law, and the law executed to the letter.

LINDENWOOD CEMETERY.

The following paper was read by Oliver P. Morgan before the Trustees of Lindenwood Cemetery at a meeting held at their office in the Old National Bank, Feb. 7, 1887, and ordered spread upon the minutes, and the subjoined resolution adopted.

The members of the Board present were: O. P. Morgan, J. H. Bass, S. B. Bond, George H. Wilson.

W. T. REITZE,

Secretary.

S. B. BOND,

Chairman.

THE MONUMENT.

A little more than a quarter of a century ago the grounds now known as Lindenwood Cemetery were covered with forest trees and a dense undergrowth; to-day they are a "beautiful city of the dead." Being richly endowed by Nature with gentle undulations, varied and diversified in form, and corresponding depressions, in which convenient roadways have been located, every lot is made easily accessible by a skillful and tasteful hand directed by the President of the association.

The Hon. I. D. G. Nelson was elected President of Lindenwood Cemetery on May 14, 1860, and has been re-elected to that position every year since that time. His wise counsels and intelligent zeal, as well as his admirable taste, are seen in the well ordered and

symmetrical plan of its grounds and lakes. Lindenwood Cemetery all these years from its organization till now has been cherished by its President as an object of love very near to his heart, calling forth his earnest interest and his thoughtful care, and Lindenwood has responded to his affection by its ever increasing beauty and restful charms. Look upon it when you may, it calls forth admiration, and seems to say: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary of life, with its ills and cares and disappointment, and rest in my bosom." The visitor lingers within its grounds almost loth to leave that delightful spot, and instinctively looks back to gaze once more upon its unfading beauties ere he passes out of sight.

The Trustees feel that to Mr. Nelson they owe a debt of gratitude for his long service in and unflagging fidelity to the best interests of Lindenwood, and, as a mark of their high appreciation of his valuable services in making ours one of the most attractive cemeteries in our land, they do now appropriate and set apart out of the surplus funds in the treasury the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2,500), or so much of it as may be necessary to defray the expenses of a monument, to be erected and placed upon the lot owned by Mr. Nelson in Lindenwood Cemetery; and it is the expressed wish of the Board of Trustees that President Nelson shall select the material and design of the monument and order its construction and its placing on his lot at an early day.

Resolved, That the sum above named be appropriated for the uses and purposes therein expressed, and a copy of the above paper be sent to Mr. Nelson.

OBITUARY RESOLUTIONS.

FORT WAYNE, IND., March, 28, 1891.

Pursuant to a call the Trustees of Lindenwood Cemetery met at the Old National Bank to consider the death of the Hon. Isaac D. G. Nelson, President of the Board.

The following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

WHEREAS, The Hon. Isaac D. G. Nelson, the esteemed President of the Board of Trustees of Lindenwood Cemetery, has been called from Time to Eternity, therefore,

Resolved, That the Trustees of Lindenwood Cemetery hereby express their sorrow for the loss sustained by them as a Board and the loss to the community of a valued citizen; that as Mr. Nelson was connected with the Cemetery Board from its organization, and was its first and only President, and held that office till the day of his death, we unhesitatingly acknowledge his great worth, his active and intelligent zeal, his unerring judgment in all matters connected with the affairs of the cemetery.

Owing to his wise supervision and good taste Lindenwood to-day ranks in beauty and picturesqueness with any cemetery in the State, if not in the West.

It was always to him a cherished spot, occupying much of his time and thoughts, but more especially during the last two years. The friends of Lindenwood cannot place too high a value upon the services

rendered by him in their behalf in arranging and beautifying the final resting place of so many of our citizens.

His was a busy and useful life, and his labors will long be remembered and appreciated by those left behind. A good man and a valuable citizen has gone from us. We shall miss him, and shall cherish his memory while life endures.

Ordered that the foregoing shall be spread upon the minutes of the Board of Trustees and a copy thereof be handed to the bereaved family with the sincere sympathy of this Board.

O. P. MORGAN,
Chairman.

TRINITY CHURCH.

By request of the Vestry of Trinity Episcopal Church, Hon. F. P. Randall prepared a memorial on the life and services of the late Isaac DeGroff Nelson, whom he had known intimately for over fifty years.

The paper was read at the parish meeting Monday evening, ordered spread upon the records of the Church and published.

Mr. Randall said :

In the death of its late Senior Warden, I. D. G. Nelson, this Church has lost one of its oldest, most active, exemplary, and revered members. His connection with Trinity Church dates from its first organization, and for nearly fifty years he has been a useful, devoted and highly esteemed member of the same; and during all of that time his Christian zeal never grew weary, nor did his devotion to true religion ever abate. In his family he was an indulgent father and a most kind and devoted husband. In his intercourse with the world the justice, propriety and benevolence of his conduct caused all to regard him as a model citizen, whilst the ease and frankness of his manners, a constant observance of the amenities of life, and a sedulous regard for the feelings of others, made for him personal friends of all with whom he came in contact. Always candid, always pleasant,

always courteous, he never offended by rudeness or wounded by unkind remarks.

In his varied relations in life he received that respect from others to which the excellence of his own character so eminently entitled him. Kind and forbearing himself, he paid respectful regard to the opinions of others.

During his long life he experienced prosperity and adversity, but his practical good sense enabled him to meet every emergency with calmness and self-control. Without ostentation or obtrusion, in his own quiet way, he had lived among us, a true Christian gentleman.

The truth of the Christian religion impressed on his youthful mind, cherished and matured in his riper years, did by the blessing of God vouchsafe to him in his last moments its hope and its consolation.

He has gone to his eternal rest. A noble granite shaft looks down upon his new-made grave. Yet all of Lindenwood, that beautiful home for the dead, is his monument. Those pleasant walks, those shady groves, those green and delightful lawns, those lovely flowers, have all taken shape and form and made their growth under his guiding and fostering hands, and while grass grows and flowers bloom they will remain to him a memorial.

Several days before his death he became satisfied that his life's work was done, and he so told his family and kindly and affectionately assured them that he was prepared, ready and even anxious to depart. No doubts or fears disturbed the Christian serenity of his last hours. Death came to him, not as the king of

terrors, but as a kind friend to open for him the doorway to the home of the blessed. In the stillness of the sick chamber he heard a heavenly voice, in subdued and melting accents of tenderness and compassion, saying: "Fear not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God," and he might in truth have adopted the words and sentiment of the great apostle:

"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. * * * Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

How many years of an ordinary life does such a dying moment overbalance.

"Servant of God, well done,
Rest from thy worldly employ;
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Maker's joy.

"Soldier of Christ, well done,
Praise be thy new employ,
And while eternal ages run
Rest in thy Savior's joy."

TRIBUTES FROM THE PRESS.

THE FORT WAYNE SENTINEL.

At 8 o'clock this morning death separated all earthly ties of Hon. I. D. G. Nelson, one of Allen County's oldest and most prominent residents, and a citizen whose very name was the synonym of all that is esteemed in the eyes of men.

After a brief though painful illness, Mr. Nelson passed to his last sleep, surrounded by a few relatives, at his residence, 132 East Berry street. Although very active in his latter years, the footprints of time stamped the infirmities of age upon his constitution, until finally he laid down all earthly cares and waited longingly for the immortal message to summon him to the shore where "the weary are at rest." His last illness dated from the time he attended the obsequies of the late lamented Mrs. Susan C. Williams, at which he was among the honored pall-bearers. * * *

The Lindenwood Association, with a high sense of appreciation of Mr. Nelson's untiring labors in behalf of improvements in the "beautiful city of the dead," has erected on the Nelson lot a magnificent monument for himself and family. Under the shadow of this shaft already sleeps his wife.

The surviving children are: Mrs. Henry W. Bond and Miss Eva Rebecca Nelson, of this city, and W. R.

Nelson, of Kansas City, Mo. The late ex-Sheriff, De Groff Nelson, also a son, died in May, 1887. Among the grandchildren are Miss Eva Theodosia Nelson and Mrs. Harry Metzgar.

THE FORT WAYNE GAZETTE.

It is with sincere regret that the people of the State will learn of the death of Hon. I. D. G. Nelson. Mr. Nelson was one of the pioneers of the State, a gentleman well known throughout its borders, and who in his long and useful life had contributed his full share to her prosperity and in the development of her great resources. He was for years an honored resident of this city, and the people delighted to claim him. An honorable and upright man, he was esteemed by all, and in his death at a ripe old age he leaves behind him the example of a life well spent, of a work well done. Men of this kind are an inspiration to the community, and, dying, require no monument to perpetuate their deeds or their memory.

* * * * *

An honorable and upright man has departed; another of the pioneers of Allen county has been called to his long reward. The death of Hon. I. D. G. Nelson occurred early yesterday morning at his home, 132 East Berry street. The deceased had been ailing for some time, and for the last few days all hopes of his recovery had been abandoned. At the time of the funeral of the late Mrs. Jesse L. Williams Mr. Nelson was one of the pall-bearers, and he then caught cold which finally culminated in the disease causing his death. A coincidence is here to be

noted, that of the pall-bearers on that occasion two have already passed beyond—Mr. Cochraue and Mr. Nelson.

In the death of Mr. Nelson, Allen County loses one of her most honorable citizens, and a man who has through life been closely identified with all her interests, mercantile and agricultural. He was a man who occupied many prominent places, positions of trust, and in all he was the same straightforward and upright person. Such men as he are a credit to a community, and their good qualities always exert a good influence upon the community, even long after they themselves have passed away. * * *

The death of his wife, one year ago last October, was a severe blow, and one from which Mr. Nelson never fully recovered. So long had they trodden together life's pathway that it made the separation all the more severe. One of his sons, De Groff Nelson, died a few years ago while serving as Sheriff of this county. There remain three children, William R. Nelson, proprietor of the *Kansas City Star*, Mrs. Theodosia Bond and Miss Eva Rebecca Nelson.

The funeral has been arranged to take place from his late residence, 132 East Berry street, to-morrow afternoon at 2 o'clock, the services to be conducted by Rector Seabrease. There will be honorary and active pall-bearers as follows: Honorary—Dr. J. S. Irwin, O. P. Morgan, F. P. Randall, J. K. Edgerton, W. T. Abbott and W. H. Jones. Active—C. D. Gorham, C. R. Higgins, S. B. Bond, J. D. Bond, Clark Fairbank and John H. Bass.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

A dispatch from Fort Wayne, Ind., announces the death at an early hour this morning of Isaac De Groff Nelson, one of the oldest residents of that city and a prominent citizen of his State. The immediate cause of his death was the disease known as la grippe, but he had already lived far beyond the three-score years and ten, which is regarded as the full measure of earthly existence. He was about 81 years of age, and had lived a life of activity and usefulness, which endured up to the very last hours of consciousness.

Mr. Nelson was a pioneer in Indiana, and was identified with the growth of Fort Wayne as a business center. He was known in early life as a practical farmer, as a merchant and a newspaper editor. For many years he was editor of the Fort Wayne *Sentinel*, and in that capacity did much to mould the sentiment of his section and State. He enjoyed much political distinction, having been elected several times to responsible local trusts in his own county, and having represented his constituents in constitutional conventions and the State Legislature. His last public service to the State was as Commissioner for the erection of the new Indiana State House, a duty which called him to Indianapolis, where he resided for several years as an active member of the State House Commission.

Upon his return to Fort Wayne, a couple of years ago, Mr. Nelson resumed his interest in the care and improvement of Lindenwood Cemetery, one among the results of his energy and public spirit. Lindenwood Cemetery is one of the loveliest places in design (improvements and ornamentation set aside) in this

country as a "city of the dead." Mr. Nelson was the first President of the corporation which founded it, and held that position at the time of his death. The personal attention he gave to it was acknowledged a few years ago by the Board of Trustees, who voted the amount of money necessary for the erection of a handsome monument to his memory; it was completed and put in place before his death. In religion Mr. Nelson was an Episcopalian, and was for more than forty years Vestryman and Warden of Trinity Church, Fort Wayne.

I. D. G. Nelson was essentially a self-made man. He began life under circumstances which afforded him but meager opportunities for education, and yet he developed subsequently great ability as a writer on practical agriculture, horticulture, pomology, rural architecture, tree culture, public questions, and especially free trade, which was the great political principle of his life. He maintained his faculties and energy up to the very last days of his career, and took the same active interest in the welfare of his country, his State and his city which he manifested early in life. He was a strong and upright man in business, in politics and in all social relations. He had a high ideal of the duties of life. He was a good citizen, and never spared himself in any emergency calling for work or self-sacrifice. His long life was filled with useful endeavor, and he will be followed to his grave by the love of all who knew him and the respect of all to whom he was known.

THE INDIANAPOLIS SENTINEL.

Isaac De Groff Nelson, of Fort Wayne, died at his home in that city yesterday at the advanced age of 81. Mr. Nelson was one of the pioneers of Indiana, and had been for more than half a century prominent in the affairs of the State. He was a man of the highest personal character, of excellent ability, of strong convictions, of great industry, and in every respect a most useful and worthy citizen. He had been from his earliest manhood an ardent Democrat. He retained to the last his devotion to Democratic principles, and always maintained that their rigid application would solve all the real problems of government. During most of his life he was actively identified with the agricultural and horticultural interests of the State, and he did very much for their promotion. As a member of the board of State House Commissioners during its entire existence Mr. Nelson rendered important service to the State. His unbending integrity, his varied knowledge, his rare aptitude for details and his keen sense of public duty combined to make him an invaluable member of the Board. Our magnificent State Capitol was erected within the appropriation and without a whisper or suggestion of scandal or jobbery. It will be an enduring monument to the memory of the men under whose auspices it was directed, none of whom had a longer or more active part in the work than Mr. Nelson.

His death, in the fullness of years and amid the peaceful surroundings of an honorable retirement, was a fitting close to an upright and noble life.

THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS.

In the death of Hon. I. D. G. Nelson Indiana loses a citizen worthy of all honor; one of those men who are a moving factor in affairs wherever they find themselves, an active principle in the progress of their day and generation. In his long life and to his latest day, Mr. Nelson was ever a participant, not a mere observer. With quick sympathies he took vital interest in all the movements of life. It was only a few days ago that he was a contributor to the columns of the *Labor Signal* of this city upon some phase of the great industrial problem. When he lived in Indianapolis during the many years of his service as a State House Commissioner, his alertness considered constantly suggestions and projects for the good of this community. Among many avenues of intelligent activity he was a horticulturist, and while here he was urging wise use and care of our parks and proper improvement of our streets. He was a clear thinker on all problems; had a living interest in politics as a matter of principle. He was a fine type of citizenship; one of the kind that contributes most largely to the sturdy body of impulse that makes real progress. He dies full of years and widely honored.

MEEHAN'S (PHILADELPHIA) MONTHLY.

Mr. I. D. G. Nelson, of Fort Wayne, Ind., died on the 25th of March in his 81st year. Mr. Nelson was one of the original horticulturists of Indiana, and his beautiful grounds and green houses were probably among the earliest of the best laid out places in that section of the country. His pretty green houses

always attracted the lover of exotic plants who visited that section, and whatever horticultural or pomological societies met in that vicinity they were always cordially and handsomely entertained at Mr. Nelson's residence. In connection with his love for horticulture he was very prominent and popular in public affairs.

One of his greatest works of public usefulness was the establishing of Lindenwood Cemetery, which is one of the most beautiful in the country. In this work he continued to take a warm interest up to the time of his decease. On his own lot in that cemetery the projectors erected a monument, on which the following is inscribed: "The Trustees feel that to Mr. Nelson they owe a debt of gratitude for his long service and unflagging fidelity to the best interests of Lindenwood, and, as a mark of their appreciation of his valuable service, order the erection of a suitable monument on his cemetery lot." We often wonder that those who would preserve their names to posterity do not often interest themselves in securing public grounds for either the living or the dead as Mr. Nelson has done; for our own part we would sooner know that our name was connected with a public square, or a beautiful cemetery, than have a monument in marble or brass, such as is usually given to a military or some other hero.

THE INDIANAPOLIS JOURNAL.

The most prominent man in Northern Indiana, as far as active connection with the development of the country is concerned, was the Hon. Isaac De Groff

Nelson, who died in Fort Wayne at 8 o'clock, March 24, at his late residence. After a brief though painful illness, contracted at the time he attended the funeral of the late Mrs. Williams. Mr. Nelson passed away, closing an earthly career of usefulness to his country and of unstinted devotion to his fellow-men.

When not serving the public Mr. Nelson was engaged in farming, giving much time to stock-raising, horticulture and landscape gardening. He was a member of the Trinity Episcopal Church and a devout Christian. His wife has been dead for several years. The surviving children are: Mrs. Henry W. Bond, Miss Eva Rebecca Nelson, of this city, and W. R. Nelson, editor and proprietor of the Kansas City *Star*.

FORT WAYNE JOURNAL.

In spite of the most inclement weather, a large number of the friends of the late Hon. I. D. G. Nelson followed his remains to Lindenwood Cemetery yesterday. At his late residence on East Berry street the touching burial services of the Episcopal Church were read by Rev. A. W. Seabrease of Trinity Episcopal Church--of which the deceased was a life-long member--and Dr. Moffat, of the First Presbyterian Church, assisted in prayer.

After the short service, which the Church provides shall be read at the grave, his remains were laid to rest in that "city of the dead" which owes so much of its beauty to the fostering care which his loving hand had lavished upon it during his life.

Mr. Nelson was one of the originators of Lindenwood Cemetery and was the first and only President

the organization has ever had, and the care and direction of its affairs have been to him a labor of love.

Intensely rural in his tastes and inclination, the natural beauties of the spot gave him a wide field for the exercise of that care and skill which were his, partly the result of a long life devoted to the study of the artistic side of rural affairs.

With Superintendent Doswell to carry out the details of the work, Mr. Nelson planned all of the material improvements which have made Lindenwood the most beautiful burial place in Indiana.

As he was laid to rest beneath the shadow of the majestic granite shaft with which his associates had, during his life, commemorated the value of his services as President, the thought that was uppermost in the minds of the assembled mourners was that all about him was a monument more beautiful and hardly less enduring than the "eternal rock" which marks his resting place and recites the value of his services to his fellow-men.

THE INDIANA FARMER.

On Tuesday, March 24th, occurred the death of Hon. Isaac DeGroff Nelson at his home in Fort Wayne, one of the oldest, best known, most enterprising, public spirited, upright and honored citizens of the State.

He was well known to our readers by his articles on various horticultural and agricultural subjects, which have appeared occasionally ever since we have been connected with the paper. Our last number contains a valuable communication from his pen, en-

titled "Another Word on Orchard Grass," probably the last he ever wrote for the public.

He was for many years a prominent member of the State Board of Agriculture and of the State Horticultural Society, and was at one time President of the latter body. For several years past he has served the State most worthily as a member of the Board of State House Commissioners, which will be honored as long as that noble building shall stand as having exercised such care, prudence and economy in its construction as to complete it within the limits of the estimate of the architect.

He was born in the State of New York in 1810, the son of a farmer, and in 1836 moved to Fort Wayne. The illness from which he died was caused by a severe cold contracted while attending the funeral of the widow of Jesse Williams, another pioneer.

FORT WAYNE SENTINEL.

By the death of Hon. I. D. G. Nelson, the city of Fort Wayne and the State of Indiana are deprived of an honored and a valuable citizen, one who figured prominently in life and who did much for the generation in which he lived. He was at one time the editor and proprietor of *The Sentinel*, and under his charge it was changed from a Whig paper to an influential Democratic organ. This was in the year 1840, and since then *The Sentinel* has remained true to the Democratic faith. Mr. Nelson has been prominent in politics and has filled with honor many offices to which the people of the county have elected him. In all his stations in life, as a private citizen and as an offi-

cial, he has been true to the grand principles of right, which ever actuated and controlled his actions, and he passes to the great beyond with a life record that is pure and spotless. Such men as Mr. Nelson are examples for the rising generation to imitate, and the influence of his career will live for many years to come. His bereaved family have the sympathy of a wide circle of friends in both this city and throughout the State.

THE KANSAS CITY EVENING TIMES.

Isaac D. G. Nelson, whose death at an advanced age has just occurred at Fort Wayne, Indiana, was one of the pioneer newspaper men of that State, a citizen of the highest integrity and a man of many attractive qualities. *The Evening Times* extends to Colonel Nelson of the *Kansas City Star* its sympathy. Colonel Nelson had a right to be proud of his father during life and his grief finds all newspaper men of his acquaintance ready to show with him respect for the memory of a veteran who was an honor to the profession.

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